

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

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FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

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FO DEA HQS WASHDC FROM MEXICO

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE SPEAKS ON DRUG PROBLEM

REF: MEXICO 252.

1. SUMMARY: ON FEB 8, AT IGUALA, GUERREO, MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, JOSE LOPEZ PORTILLO, FOR FIRST TIME KNOWN TO US, MADE REMARKS ON PROBLEM OF MEXICAN DRUG PRODUCTION. HIS STATEMENTS ARE SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE THEY GIVE INDICATION OF HIS PERSONAL CONCERN; AND THEY EMPHASIZE NEED TO PROVIDE ALTERNATE INCOME SOURCES FOR FARMERS GROWING ILLICIT CROPS. FAVORABLE EDITORIAL APPEARED FEB 10 IN NOVEDADES. HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS REMARKS ARE GIVEN BELOW. END SUMMARY.

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2. IN HIS IGUALA SPEECH (MUCH OF WHICH WAS NOT DEVOTED TO

DRUG PROBLEM), LOPEZ PORTILLO MADE INTER ALIA FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. HE CRITICIZED SHARPLY THOSE WHO WERE NOT SINCERE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO RESCUE CAMPESINOS FROM CLUTCHES OF INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKERS.

B. HE PROMISED THAT AS PRESIDENT HE WOULD ELIMINATE "DARK INTERESTS/ THAT MADE IT UNECONOMICAL FOR FARMERS TO GROW LEGAL CROPS, AND WOULD PROVIDE ALTERNATE SOURCES OF INCOME TO LIBERATE FARMER FROM "THAT (DRUG) COLONIALISM."

C. EFFECTS CAN ONLY BE COMBATED ELIMINATING CAUSES: CAMPESINO IS ONLY POOR INSTRUMENT WHO SERVES FOREIGN INTERESTS. LOPEZ HAS AGREED WITH GUERRERO GOVERNOR FIGUEROA THAT "THE CAUSES OF THIS VICE, NOT THE EFFECTS," MUST BE DEALT WITH. "IF WE DO THIS BY A RATIONAL AND PLANNED EFFORT, THE NEXT SIX YEARS WILL SEE A CONTINUATION OF THE (ECONOMIC) TAKEOFF OF GUERRERO."

3. THE ABOVE REPORT WAS PUBLISHED FEB 9, ON FOLLOWING DAY NOVEDADES PUBLISHED EDITORIAL ENTITLED "CAMPEEIONS AND THE DRUGS" WHICH APPLAUDED LOPEZ' STATEMENTS AND SAID THEY WERE VERY WELL RECEIVED BY CAMPESIONS WHO HAD LEARD LOPEZ SPEAK.

4. COMMENT: THESE REMARKS ARE SIGNIFICANT NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY ARE FIRST STATEMENTS (WE BELIEVE) LOPEZ HAS MADE PUBLICLY CONCERNING THE NARCOTICE PROBLEM, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE ECHOED THE SAME LINE TAKEN BY PRESIDENT ECHEVERRRIA DURING THE LATTER'S MEETING WITH CONGRESSMEN WOLFF AND GILMAN (SEE REFTTEL), WHEN HE SAID ALTER NATE SOURCES OF INCOME MUST BE DEVELOPED FOR THE MEXICAN FARMERS GROWING ILLEGAL CROPS. WE HAVE BEEN SPECULATING FOR SOME TIME ABOUT WHAT LOPEZ POSITION ON NARCOTICS MIGHT BE, AND UNTIL NOW HAVE HAD NOTHING TO GO ON EXCEPT OJEDA PAULLADA'S ASSURANCES THAT THE NEW PRESIDENT WOULD BE CONCERNED AND COOPERATIVE. NOW WE HAVE ON RECORD THE FIRST PUBLIC INDICATION THAT THE FUTURE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED AT LEAST WITH THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF MEXICAN NARCOTICS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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